

# RAIL REPORT

November 2016

No. 675



Rocky Mountain Railroad Club • Rocky Mountain Railroad Historical Foundation

## Photo and Video Potpourri Night

Presented by Nathan Holmes

November 8th, 2016 • 7:30 PM

Club members can bring 12 to 15 slides or digital images, or 5 to 8 minutes of railroad-related video to show off. We'll have a 35mm slide projector, digital projector and laptop, and DVD player available. If you need something else, let us know and we'll do our best to accommodate.

To avoid technical difficulties the night of the show, we'd like to compile digital images and build a show for each presenter. Digital images should be high quality JPEGs that are a maximum of 1920 pixels wide or 1080 pixels tall. That's the limits of our projector, so it doesn't do any good to go larger. Please email the images you would like to show to [rmrc-slides@drwg.net](mailto:rmrc-slides@drwg.net) no later than Sunday, November 6, so they will be ready for the regular meeting. For those showing slides, just show up with a box or a tray. If you're interested in showing some video, please get in contact with me and we'll work through the technical details.

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Please join us for an enjoyable, educational evening at Christ Episcopal Church at 2950 South University Boulevard, University at Bates, where there is plenty of off street parking at the rear of the complex. Enter into Barnes Hall, where we hold the monthly meetings, on the mid-south side doors. Please bring a guest. **All programs are intended to provide an educational experience on railroading. The general public is welcome to attend. There is no charge for this meeting.**

### RMRRC 2016 Calendar

November 12th Colorado Model Railroad Museum in Greeley.

December 13th Annual Business Meeting, Program and Treats.

Due to circumstances beyond our control, programs and dates are subject to change without notice.

Please contact Dave Schaaf with program ideas at [ds5280@comcast.net](mailto:ds5280@comcast.net) or 303 988-3456.

## November Is The Month for Membership Renewal

This year the club will again send a renewal invoice to each member. Some households will receive more than one renewal. Expect to see the renewal invoices in your mail box this month before Thanksgiving. Each renewal form has spaces provided to correct any errors with your contact information. If you have an email account please make sure we have the correct address.

We use an email notification service on a random basis. I know many of you are bombarded with electronic advertising and notices from various groups. The club tries to limit the number of notices to important reminders, news and emergencies.

The membership year is January 1st through December 31st of each year.

There will be no increase in dues for 2017. To maintain membership in RMRRC, your dues for the upcoming year should be paid by December 31st.

Multimember households should return each membership form, but a single payment for the household is desired.

The club would greatly appreciate if all of our members renew by the end of year. We do allow for a month grace period in January. The re-sequencing of seniority numbers is performed the first week in February. If you wish to keep your seniority please make sure you have renewed by then.

Your membership cards will be mailed with the March *Rail Report*. More information about this mailing will be provided at a later time.

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## A Call For Nominations For The Rocky Mountain Railroad Club and The Rocky Mountain Railroad Historical Foundation

Any member wanting to volunteer or nominate another member for either an officer or director position should contact the nominating committee, Andy

Dell or Nathan Holmes at the November Club meeting or contact them through the Club website or by mail at the Club P. O. Box.

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## Notice Of Annual Meetings

The annual meetings of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club and the Rocky Mountain Railroad Historical Foundation will be held on Tuesday, December 13, 2016, 7:30 PM at Christ Episcopal Church, 2950 South University Boulevard, Denver, Colorado. These meetings are called for the purpose of electing Officers and Directors for both organizations. At these meetings the Club or Foundation may conduct any other business as may properly come before these meetings.

For Rail Report 675, the masthead photo features Union Pacific Alco RS-27 Number 675 at Omaha, Nebraska, in 1961.

– Harold Ranks photo from the James L. Ehernberger Collection.



Members and guests enjoyed the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club Annual Banquet Luncheon in the Petroleum Room at the Denver Athletic Club.

– Photo © 2016 Nathan Holmes.

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## Notes From The President

By Nathan Holmes

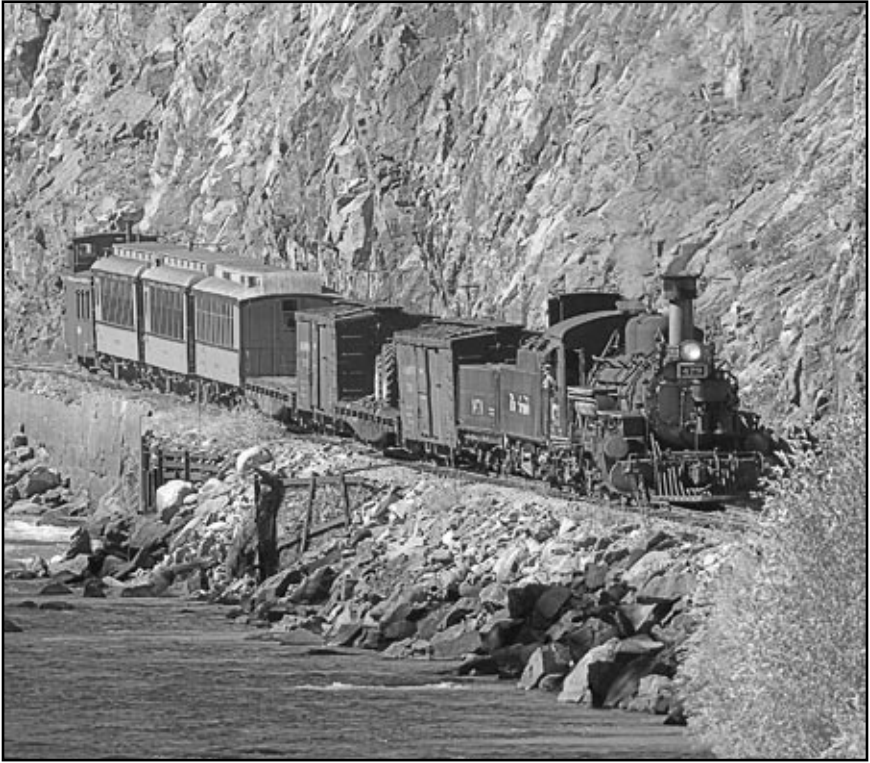
I have to say I'm relieved that my third and final banquet as president is over. I'm always sweating it right up until the last person leaves, but I think it came off wonderfully this year. I want to thank all of you who joined us for our annual social event, as well as thank those on the board who helped pull it off. If any of you have feedback about the banquet one way or the other, I'd like to hear it. It will help steer our direction for future banquets.

I'd be remiss if I didn't also thank our door prizes donors. We received tickets from the Durango and Silverton Railroad, the Leadville Colorado & Southern, and the Georgetown Loop, 2017 calendars from Joe McMillan, a copy of Tom Klinger's new South Park book from Tom himself, and an assortment

of railroad books donated by Dave Goss and Jim Ehernberger. It's thanks to our generous sponsors that we have all the wonderful door prizes to give away.

We're having a November outing to the Colorado Model Railroad Museum in Greeley! Back in September, the board had discussed the possibility of doing one of our informal Saturday trips up to the CMRM (formerly known as the Greeley Freight Station Museum). We've done this in the past, though it's been quite a number of years now. For those not familiar with the place, the layout is 5,500 square feet with a 20 scale mile mainline, all beautifully finished. It's an easy day outing from Denver, and by mid-November there's not typically a risk of bad weather. Plus, because we're there during public hours, it's an easy

## Notes From The President



Engine 473 leads a mixed train in the Animas River canyon, south from Silverton, Colorado. This was a photo charter train on the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad on October 7, 2016. – Photo © 2016 Dave Schaaf.

trip to set up and folks can stay as long as they'd like.

We are on their calendar for Saturday, November 12th at 10 AM. Admission will be their regular price (\$8 adults, \$6 for those 65 and up, and children up to 12 are \$4 if you want to bring the grand kids), but they'll give us one of the volunteers to guide us through the layout, answer questions, talk about its construction and operation, and then give us the "behind the scenes" tour.

If you want to go, please contact

me so I can get you on the reservation sheet. They'd like to hold it to about 25 people so that it's a manageable group, and traditionally we've managed to just about fill that. If it gets too large, I can ask them to have a second volunteer handy and they'll split us in half. Otherwise the group just gets too big to really see and hear everything. Please email me at [rmrc-greeley@drwg.net](mailto:rmrc-greeley@drwg.net) (or call and leave a message on my cell at 719-235-1286) to let me know you'd like to attend and how many are coming as part of your group.

## Notes From The President



The Durango and Silverton has constructed a new steel boxcar from former D&RGW steel flat 6634. The body was built by Monarch Iron in Durango, while the refurbishment of the flatcar frame and trucks was done by the D&S shops. The new car is currently painted in a purple scheme for October, Cancer Awareness Month. It will eventually be repainted into standard D&S gold.

– Photo © 2016 Nathan Holmes.

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Don't forget – November will be one of our famous Slide Potpourri months, where members are encouraged to bring 12-15 of their own images – or a few minutes of video – to share with everyone. It can be just about anything rail-related you want to show. For example, I'm probably going to show some Welsh 2-ft narrow gauge steam I shot the week before the banquet. Even if you don't want to show anything, the RMRRC's annual "open projector night" always brings out some interesting stuff, so be sure to mark the night of the 8th on your calendars. If you'd like to show some digital images, please be sure to get those to me at least

a day ahead of time so that I can build them into a show and make sure we won't have any technical glitches.

I hope you can join us at the November meeting, and I look forward to seeing what you all choose to bring.

I'm always available to answer questions, talk about ideas, or address concerns from club members. You can reach me through my personal email at [me@ndholmes.com](mailto:me@ndholmes.com), or by phone at 719-235-1286. Please don't hesitate to reach out to me.



The Rocket unit at Colorado Springs, Colorado on August 4, 1940. This “B” unit 750 with controls operated the Colorado Springs to Limon, Colorado, segment where it was picked up by the Denver to Limon section and used as a “B” unit to Kansas City.

– Jackson C. Thode Photo from the James L. Ehernberger Collection.

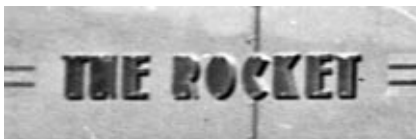
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## The Rocky Mountain Rocket

By Michael M. Bartels

Fifty years ago Rock Island passenger service to Denver and Colorado Springs ended with

discontinuance of the Rocky Mountain Rocket west of Omaha, Nebraska. The last westbound departure of No. 7 was October 15, 1966, with the last trip of No. 8 eastbound on October 16th. An article in the October 16, 1966, *Lincoln (Nebraska) Sunday Journal and Star* said among the last riders was retired Denver postal carrier (and famed rail photographer) Otto Perry, who apparently rode No. 8 to Lincoln and planned to catch the last No. 7 west. Nos. 7 and 8 continued east of Omaha, renamed the Cornhusker, although on May 1, 1967, service was reduced to unnamed day-



time Nos. 7 and 10. They were cut back from Omaha to Council Bluffs effective January 6,

1970, and made their last runs between Chicago and Council Bluffs on May 31, 1970.

The Rocky Mountain Rocket was inaugurated on November 12, 1939, helping the Rock Island regain some competitive parity with the City of Denver and the Denver Zephyr. The train initially had one unit and seven cars. The E3A and five cars went to Denver, while a steam locomotive pulled two through cars to Colorado Springs. It was actually the second Rocket to serve Denver. One of the Rock Island’s six original stream-

## The Rocky Mountain Rocket



The Eastbound Rocky Mountain Rocket near Sable, Colorado, operating on the UP line on July 12, 1954.

– George A. Trout Photo from the James L. Ehernberger Collection.

lined train sets began making a daytime round trip between Kansas City and Denver three times a week on October 18, 1937. The train was reassigned to Kansas City - Oklahoma City service beginning February 13, 1938. On June 30, 1940, a Kansas City section of the Rocky Mountain Rocket was inaugurated, with a through sleeping car and coach to Denver. Power was one of the unique AB6s, Nos. 750 and 751, which had a flat-end cab, a 1,000 hp engine and initially a baggage compartment. They powered Nos. 107 and 108 between Kansas City and Belleville, Kansas, then operated as a B unit to Limon, and again as an A to Colorado Springs. After the Kansas City section was discontinued in September 1943, the AB6s ran through as B units from Chicago, becoming the signature equipment of the Rocket. They were seen less frequently by the early 1960s and were converted to Chicago suburban service in 1965.

The Rocket ran with three units and

12 or more cars into the mid-1950s but by the early 1960s was in serious decline. People still traveling by rail were usually found aboard the Denver Zephyr, completely re-equipped in October 1956 and now offering through cars from Chicago to Colorado Springs. The last notable passenger was former President Dwight Eisenhower, who with his wife, Mamie, left Denver on No. 8, July 10, 1963, after participating in the “Town Meeting of the World,” the first instantaneous hookup among nations using the Telstar communications satellite. Hol Wagner noted in the Omaha Camerail Club’s *Mixed Train* they had arrived in Denver July 7th on Santa Fe No. 28 on the business car Santa Fe, accompanied by the sleeper Pine Bluff. The Rocket’s Colorado Springs sleeping car was permanently gone by the fall of 1963 and the Chicago - Denver sleeper and diner lounge came off at the end of June 1965, replaced by a snack beverage car. Schedules were slowed considerably from the peak running times, reflecting the Rock

## The Rocky Mountain Rocket



The original 1937 Rocky Mountain Rocket at Denver Union Station, with the distinctive TA unit and the car following.

– H. E. High photo from the James L. Ehernberger collection.

Island's deteriorating physical condition. By the spring of 1980 even Rock Island freight service was ending as the bankrupt road was ordered shut down for liquidation.

*Note: Mike remembers it well, going down to see No. 8 go through Lincoln many*

*times, including the last time. He saw them finishing up the eastbound switching at Limon one afternoon and even left Colorado Springs extra early for the trip home to catch the morning division westbound. He only rode it twice though, from Lincoln to Chicago each way. Usually he took the Zephyrs.*

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## Ranniger's Roadbed Commissary

By Dave Goss

Ranniger's Roadbed Commissary was a regular event throughout the years 1978 through 1994. Jim, Lil and Bruce Ranniger assembled a crew of volunteers to help them set up and operate memorable meals at many Club outings and field trips. During the 1980's especially, the commissary would operate as many as three times a years and were found along the Colorado Midland; the Den-

ver, South Park & Pacific; the Switzerland Trail; the Florence and Cripple Creek and other abandoned rail lines throughout Colorado. Sites included stored locations such as Hagerman Pass, Mt. Alto, Marshall Pass, Tennessee Pass, the Alpine Tunnel, Boreas Pass, Phantom Canyon and Dale Creek in Wyoming. What was particularly special were the operations on the specially designed



## Ranniger's Roadbed Commissary

(Continued from page 8)

"Silver Commissary" car on the High Country Railroad at Heritage Square, where meals were prepared on board the train.

Besides the unique settings, the Ranniger's and their volunteers were cheerful and never deterred by rain, fog, wind or other surprises that nature provided. "Divine intervention" on August 13, 1983 (as described in the Club's History *Journey to Yesteryear*, page 99) even addressed the rare criticism leveled at the commissary's crew.

First served as "ballast burgers" in 1978, "Cinderburgers" became the fare on the Silver Commissary in 1980 until the end. The menu often included chips, beans, ice cream and even steaks occasionally. The logistics and planning for each outing was meticulous and never did the commissary run out of food, even when trips included back-to-back meals. In fact, as many as 125 people might be served on a given trip.

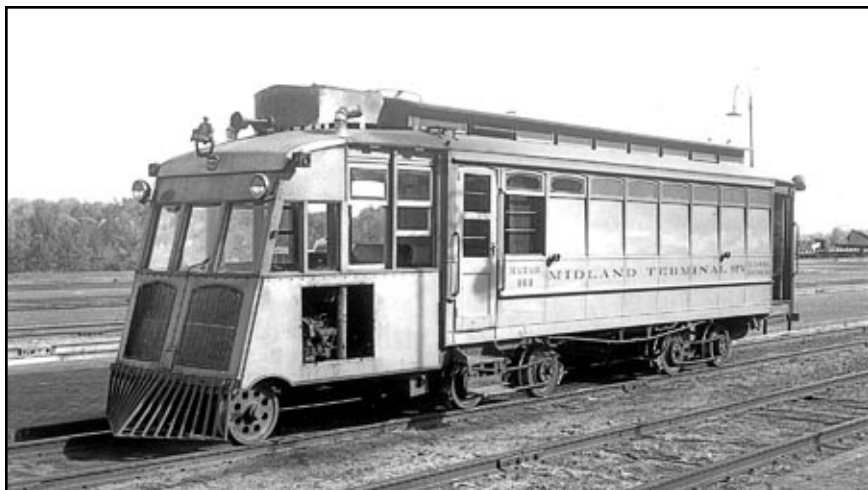
For the Marshall Pass trip, 77 club members and friends, traveling in a 33 car caravan, had lunch between Mears Junction and Sargent thanks to Jim and Lil and the supplies they carried in their own vehicles for this trip. When the membership would hold a workday at the Colorado Railroad Museum, the commissary provided meals to all participants. The last run of the commissary



The "Silver Commissary" at an outing on the High Country Railroad on June 21, 1981. This "dining car" was staffed by the Ranniger's and other volunteers, providing gourmet "Cinderburgers" and other treats from a menu provided to all members. – Photo © 1981 Pete West.

was on August 20, 1994 when more than 70 members and guest visited the Ames Monument near Vedauwoo, Wyoming.

Thirty-two times Jim, Lil, Bruce and volunteers served meals from road-side tents or from the Silver Commissary. Thousands of Club members and their friends enjoyed these special meals for which the Club became as well-known as for sponsored trips. A brass band, hail and rain, steak sandwiches, cake and ice cream and Cinderburgers were all part of this great tradition. Today, all that remains of the Commissary is a sign in Jim Ranniger's garage reminding him of the memories of great fellowship and meals provided during the 22 years of Ranniger's Roadbed Commissary.



Car No. 101 at Colorado Springs, Colorado, May 26, 1942.  
– Jack Pfeifer photo from the James L. Ehernberger Collection.

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## The Midland Terminal Railway Motor Cars

By James L. Ehernberger

Morris Cafky in *Rails Around Gold Hill*, published by the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club in 1955, provided excellent information regarding the Midland Terminal Railway. He states:

“Improved roads and competition of private autos had so cut into passenger traffic that, after 1931, the colorful steam passenger trains were taken off. For a short time, a combo was tied on the rear of regular freight trains. Then, after Golden Cycle took over, trains No. 1 and No. 2 reappeared again—as motor-powered, direct drive “Doodlebugs.” In 1934, one motor was built in the Colorado City shops from a street car body, once the property of the Colorado Springs & Interurban. During 1937, a second motor, No. 102, joined No. 101 on the roster, and was much improved in exterior design. Each motor had a large compartment for baggage and mail, plus

a very small passenger compartment seating 6 to 8 persons.”

“Early in 1942, the Federal Government banned gold mining for the duration of the conflict. The first MT casualty was the daily passenger motor. Lack of business was such that even the economical motor rail cars could not operate in the black; consequently, the Colorado Public Utilities Commission permitted Midland Terminal to become ‘freight only’ in the Spring of 1943.”

The Colorado Springs & Interurban operation ceased on April 30, 1932. One can only assume these car bodies were available some time after that shut down. There were still other street railway operations, and perhaps they figured they could sell them, rather than burning them, and salvaging the metal that remained. Scrap prices in the 1930s

## The Midland Terminal Railway Motor Cars



Midland Terminal motor car 101 making its Daily Except Sunday station stop at Victor, Colorado. This was the eastward trip due at the station at 2:55 PM.  
– Jack Pfeifer photo (he apparently rode the motor car) from the James L. Ehernberger Collection.

made salvaged metal nearly worthless.

In my research I could not find any information as to what the former car numbers were for these two car bodies.

Cafky had additional data reading: “The Midland Terminal Railway rebuilt 2 motor cars, M.T. Nos. 101 and 102, from old Colorado Springs & Interurban electric street cars in the late 1930s. [No. 101 was built in 1934, and No. 102 in 1937, so saying “late 1930’s” does not apply to car No. 101.] Cafky also stated “Each car was powered by a pair of 118-hp. Buda diesel motors and had a capacity of 8 passengers and 12 tons of mail and express.”

In another source: *The Short Line Doodlebug* by Edmund Keilty, published by Interurban Press in 1988, he shows Car No. 102 scrapped about 1943. Nothing has been found on No. 101.

Looking at a time table, the Midland Terminal motors used the Santa Fe station in Colorado Springs, and the 55.7-mile trip from Colorado Springs (departing 8:30 AM) to Cripple Creek (arriving at 11:30 AM) made an average of 18.97 miles per hour. The eastward trip from Cripple Creek (departing at 2:40 PM) to Colorado Springs (arriving at 5:35 PM) made an average speed of 19.51 miles per hour. The westward train was No. 1; and the eastward train was No. 2.

**Happy Thanksgiving from the Officers and Directors  
of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club**

## The Midland Terminal Railway Motor Cars



In 1937 the MT took another old Colorado Springs & Interurban street car body and modified it considerably, making it slightly streamlined, compared with Car No 101. This image is at Cripple Creek on August 9, 1941.

– R. H. Kindig Photo from the James L. Ehernberger Collection.

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## Current Railroad Happenings



BNSF-UP over under action on the BNSF Angora Subdivision and the UP Sidney Subdivision. BNSF 5665, AC4400CW, and BNSF 9741, SD70MAC, were distributed power units (DPU) on northbound BNSF coal empty. Both trains were moving. UP 1680, SD40N, and UP 1583, SD40N, were westbound on the Sidney Local. Over and under trains moving October 13, 2016 at Sidney, Nebraska.

– Photo © 2016 by Chip.

# Events of Railroad History: Nineteen Years Ago – Anniversary of the Arrival of the First Eastern Railway Train to the City of Denver

*Rocky Mountain News*, August 18, 1889

Contributed by Dan Edwards

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## First Union Depot

[People realized] a new depot must be built. Plans were prepared, and when the last rails of the Denver Pacific were laid, the foundation was completed and the brick on the ground for building. It was to be a two-story brick structure with waiting rooms, ticket office and baggage room on the first floor and railroad offices on the second floor. As it was the first big public building to be erected in the new city, it must have a cornerstone, and the ceremony of laying it was left to the Masonic lodge in the city.

St. John's day, June 24, 1870, was the day set apart for the laying of the cornerstone, and as the Denver Pacific was completed on the 21st, it was decided to celebrate both events at once. The Cheyenne lodge of Masons was invited and responded in force, bringing six carloads of Cheyenne people with them, and the fair grounds were engaged for the banquet after the ceremonies.

Friday the 24th was a beautiful day, and every citizen of Denver was out early dressed in their best for the occasion. About 10 o'clock the Cheyenne special train drawn by the historic old engine "General D.H. Moffat" arrived, bringing the Ninth Infantry United States band from Fort Russell and a large number of citizens and Masons. A grand parade was formed, and the cornerstone was laid with all the solemnity of the Masonic ritual. The stone was two feet square and eighteen

inches thick and was taken from Morrison's red sandstone quarry on Bear creek. In the stone were placed copies of the territorial papers, coins, etc., sealed in a tin box.

After the ceremonies were concluded, the crowd adjourned to the fair ground, where a fine collation had been spread in one of the pavilions, which was free to everyone. The address of the day was then made by Bishop George M. Crandall. The remainder of the day was spent in sports on the fair ground, ending with a grand ball in the evening. The Denver Pacific ran trains out and back every hour until 10 o'clock in the evening.

Such is a history of the commencement of Denver's first union passenger depot, which was completed the following fall and remains today at the foot of Twenty-second street, used as a paint warehouse and lost in a network of railroad tracks which now extend from one side of the city to the other. The projectors of the building supposed they were erecting a depot that would accommodate all the railroads that would come to Denver for twenty years at least, but they did not reckon upon the phenomenal growth that followed quickly upon the building of the first road. The arrivals and departures in the union depot here nineteen years ago today were easily counted on one hand—four was all—while today ninety-six trains arrive and depart from the union depot.

## The Second Station

The Colorado Central to Golden

## Events of Railroad History

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was completed early in 1871 and was quickly followed by the Boulder Valley, both of which ran their trains to the union depot. At that time the Colorado Central ran out on the Denver Pacific track to the junction, near where the Grant smelters are today and from there branched off, crossing the Platte river near Argo park and striking their present line near Clear creek. In 1873 the Denver, Pacific and Boulder Valley concluded to build a depot nearer the heart of the city, and a handsome little passenger station was erected on the corner of Sixteenth and Wynkoop streets, which did good service for many years and is still in existence, being used as a coal office down in the flats.

Shortly after this the Colorado Central found it necessary to shorten their line by building directly into the city from Clear creek instead of around by the junction, and they also forsook the union depot and erected a little cheap frame building in a dense grove of cottonwoods used previous to that

as a beer garden on Sixteenth street near Wewatta. This is what afterwards became known as the "Sixteenth street depot" and was really the foundation of the present union depot.

By this time the Denver and Rio Grande had been built and had a little frame depot on the corner of Nineteenth and Wynkoop on the site of the present Union Pacific freight depot, and the Denver and South Park had a little frame depot in West Denver at the foot of Larimer Street. In 1877 the Colorado Central was leased by the Union Pacific and shortly afterwards the Denver Pacific and Kansas Pacific passed into their hands. The old union depot was too far up town to be popular, and one by one the trains deserted it and commenced running into the little Sixteenth street depot.

The beautiful grove of trees that surrounded this picturesque little station one by one gave way to the railroad tracks, and soon all the trains but those of the Rio Grande and South Park ran into the Sixteenth street depot.

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### Colorado Railroad Museum

For information call 303-279-4591 or <http://www.coloradorailroadmuseum.org/event-listings>

Rocky Mountain Railroad Club Members in good standing, and upon presentation of a current membership card, are entitled to free admission. Members are invited to join the Colorado Railroad Museum (a Museum membership provides certain merchandise discounts), and members may participate in restoration or other maintenance programs as volunteers. Please contact the volunteer coordinator at the CRRM.

### Intermountain Chapter, NRHS Events

For information call 303-883-2435 or see <http://www.cozx.com/nrhs>.

Wednesday, November 16, 2016

Dinner Meeting at Red Lobster in Wheat Ridge, Colorado

## **Publishers Statement — Rocky Mountain Rail Report**

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### **Club Information**

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Facebook:  
[www.facebook.com/rockymtnrrclub](http://www.facebook.com/rockymtnrrclub)

### **Club and Foundation Officers**

President	Nathan Holmes
Vice President	Dave Schaaf
Secretary	Roger Sherman
Treasurer	Keith Jensen

### **Club and Foundation Directors**

Andy Dell, Dennis Leonard, Pat Mauro,  
Debbie MacDonald, Michael Tinetti, Nathan Zachman.

### **Membership Information**

Membership in the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club may be obtained by sending the annual dues to the Club address listed above.

Regular membership dues are \$35.00. Overseas regular membership dues are \$45.00.

Contributing membership is \$50.00. Sustaining membership is \$70.00.

Patron membership is \$100.00. Golden membership is \$500.00.

An associate membership for spouses and children is \$25.00 additional.

Members joining after April may send a payment of \$3.00 for each month remaining in the year.

Members of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club are also members in the Rocky Mountain Railroad Historical Foundation, the non-profit arm of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club.

### **Board Meetings**

Members are always welcome to attend any board of directors meeting. Please contact any Club officer for the date, time and location.

### **Newsletter Contributions**

Newsletter contributions and items for publication should be sent to:

Bruce Nall, Editor  
Rocky Mountain Rail Report  
PO Box 620579  
Littleton, CO 80162-0579

E-mail: [selectimag@aol.com](mailto:selectimag@aol.com)

**Items for the December Rail Report should be sent by November 16th.**